



# With Annual Report Highlights

#### EDITORIAL MESSAGE



#### **AMAA NEWS**

is a publication of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652. Tel. (201) 265-2607; Fax (201) 265-6015 E-Mail: amaa@amaa.org; Website: www.amaa.org The AMAA is a Tax Exempt, not for profit organization under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3)



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FRONT COVER PICTURE:

Children in Armenia with their Christmas Joy Packages

# **God's Plan For Salvation**

**Andrew Torigian** 

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John 3:16).

We believers are so fortunate because we know that our Savior Jesus Christ was sent by God and came to this world to die for our sins. God had a plan of salvation for us. This was well thought out by God. He knows how all this would end, including the death of His only Son. He did not send "His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him." (John 3:17).

Although salvation is ours for the asking, it cost God His Son. We Christians acknowledge that God sent His Son to die for our sins and through Him we can receive forgiveness for our sins. Jesus then rose from the dead to give us life eternal. Not only after we pass into eternity but also here and now. Are we following God's plan for salvation? It offers us heaven and it offers us a life more abundant here on earth. It is up to each of us to decide.

This year, 2008 marks the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). To bring into focus its part in God's great salvation plan, the AMAA will be celebrating this great achievement by organizing a tour to Armenia for friends and members. We will see first-hand the projects of the AMAA and the historic sites of Armenia from July 14 through July 23, 2008 (see page 5 for details). President Robert Kocharian has accepted our invitation to attend the 90th Anniversary celebration in Armenia.

On another note, we want to also remember the anniversary of the loss of a great man of faith. Last year on January 19, 2007 Hrant Dink, a member of our Armenian Evangelical Church of Gedik Pasa (Istanbul), was gunned down as he left his office. Hrant was editor of the bilingual Turkish Armenian weekly newspaper Agos. Through his writings he was resolute to bring about some change for which he was assassinated.

Hrant met his wife Rakel at the Armenian Evangelical Camp Armen in Tuzla. Hrant was the camp counselor and then Administrator of the Camp. His message and legacy remains with us. May God's mercy and grace prevail forever.

#### 31 WEST CENTURY ROAD, PARAMUS, NJ 07652 PHONE: (201) 265-2607, FAX: (201) 265-6015, E-MAIL: AMAA@AMAA.ORG

March 2008

Dikran Youmshakian

Field Director

#### Dear Friends:

As the earth warms, and the snow melts away, the buds of flowers start to bloom. Spring takes its course in nature. That which has died in the fall, comes back to life in the spring. Likewise during this time we remember our Savior and His resurrection. Innocent blood spilled for our redemption. However, this does beg the question: If so innocent, how could such a brutal end to Christ's earthly life been allowed? Matthew 27:24 gives us some insight as to the answer:

When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!"

Pilate recognized the innocence of Christ, but took no responsibility for the outcome. Today, we can also respond like Pilate – recognize the suffering of innocent people and rationalize that we are not part of the problem. However, by just standing by and doing nothing (or very little), are we not still part of the problem? There is a famous quote we have probably all heard: "If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem." We believe there is a lot of truth to that. One major example of this is the Armenian Genocide, which we commemorate on April 24. The world stood by in silence and watched the mass genocide of innocent blood that was shed. Again, this begs the question: If so innocent, how could events have led to such a brutal end to so many people's earthly lives? The world was not responsible, so they believed it was not their problem.

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) was founded to take responsibility for becoming part of the solution in any way it can. This year, AMAA celebrates <u>90 years</u> of service with 140 projects around the world in the areas of relief, evangelism, education, social service, health care, church and child care. The AMAA cannot do this alone. It is only possible through the sacrificial giving of caring individuals like you. Your faithful support allows the AMAA to continue to provide vital services to thousands of individuals each year. Join us as we celebrate the resurrection of our Savior, and as we continue to do His work for the fulfillment of His commission.

It is important to realize that we may not have been part of the problems of the world but we are definitely called to be part of the solution.

Քրիստոս յարևաւ ի մևռևլոց. Օրհնևալ է Յարութիւնը Քրիստոսի։

"Kristos haryav ee merelotz. Orhnyal e haroutuneh Kristosi" (Christ is resurrected from the grave. May his resurrection be blessed).

In Christ's service,

Andrew Torigian
Executive Director

#### ARMENIA

# **Christmas in Armenia & Karabagh**

very year, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) and the Evangelical Church of Armenia (ECA) organize Christmas programs throughout Armenia, Karabagh and Georgia. During December 2007 and January 2008, 20,000 children and parents participated in the Christmas programs organized by AMAA Armenia and ECA. The events were organized in 50 locations throughout Armenia, Karabagh and Georgia. 11,000 children received Christmas presents.

The children participated in the programs by singing and reciting Bible verses. They received Christmas joy packages

which were made possible thanks to the AMAA's Christmas Joy Package drive and thanks to the Armenian Evangelical Churches. Many donors participated with their generous gifts. This year, one donor gave \$4,000 which brought Christmas cheer to 400 more children.

On behalf of the staff and volunteers of AMAA Armenia, and on behalf of the tens of thousands of participating children, we thank those who prayed for and contributed towards these Christmas programs.

We are also very appreciative of the volunteers of the AMAA's Summer Camp & Christmas Committee as well as the



Christmas joy packages ready to be distributed.

Orphan & Child-Care committee. We acknowledge their creative efforts at raising funds for and generating awareness of these Christmas programs.

We thank our partner organizations such as SEL of France and Dorcas Aid International of Holland for their contributions to these programs.

Most important, we praise God for enabling us all to reach out to these children with the love of Jesus Christ.□





### **Spreading Warmth in the Winter**

Many needy children in Armenia were provided with a little warmth this winter. The Armenia Summer Camp and Christmas Committee has several ladies hand-knitting hats, scarves, and blankets. This year alone, over 300 such articles were provided to needy children in Armenia and thousands of items have been provided since inception of this program. What a tremendous labor of love with a personal touch! On behalf of the children, we want to express our deepest appreciation for so much time and effort these ladies give to such a worthwhile endeavor. Just another opportunity we have to reflect Christ's love in a tangible, meaningful way.

Elbiz Baghdigian, Armenia Summer Camp & Christmas Committee chair, with the help of AMAA staff packing the hats and scarves for shipment to Armenia.



#### ARMENIA

# **Special Ministry to the Handicapped**





n January 26, the "Shoghig" youth choir of Armavir, Armenia gave a special concert to over 150 handicapped children and staff of the Kharpert orphanage for handicapped children. The concert consisted of both spiritual and national/folk songs. It inspired and brought great joy and enthusiasm to the children.

## **Visit to the President of Armenia**

on February 1, Robert Kocharian the President of the Republic of Armenia, hosted the Board of the Evangelical Church of Armenia (ECA) at the Presidential Palace.

The delegation presented to the President the projects carried out by the ECA with support from AMAA, SEL and Hope for Armenia of France and Dorcas Aid International of Holland. The President expressed great appreciation for the work done by the Evangelicals, stressing the importance of the cooperation between the government and the ECA.

The delegation also presented to the President ECA's views and suggestions on the current laws about freedom of conscience and religion in Armenia.

The delegation also informed the President of AMAA's 90th Anniversary celebrations during the summer, inviting him to participate. The President accepted the invitation, saying that he will participate, regardless of what position he occupies in the summer.  $\square$ 



#### 90th ANNIVERSARY TRIP TO ARMENIA

As part of celebrating AMAA's 90th anniversary, all friends and members of the AMAA are invited to come to Armenia on July 14 through July 23, 2008. The trip will include visits to AMAA service areas and projects and historical and cultural sites of Armenia. The AMAA's 90th Anniversary celebration will be held on Saturday, July 19, 2008.

It is important to make your hotel reservation for this trip early, as there are limited rooms available in Armenia in the summer.

The current room rates per night based on double occupancy:

\$230 for the Marriott Hotel. \$130 for the Ani Plaza Hotel.

If you intend to join us on this trip, send your check for the total hotel cost to the AMAA to secure your rooms. Plan to arrive on July 14, 2008 and leave on July 23, 2008.

There will be customized bus tours to AMAA locations and historic sites. The tour costs will include lunch and dinner daily with breakfast included at each hotel.

For further information, please call the AMAA at 201-265-2607.

#### INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN ARMENIA

Also, in Armenia during this summer (tentatively July 3-23, 2008) AMAA is planning an internship program for young adults (18 and up). The main focus of the program will be in Armenia allowing young adults an opportunity to participate in either an AMAA-sponsored construction project, or at one of the AMAA's summer camps. The trip will conclude with site-seeing in Yerevan. Those interested should contact the AMAA office by March 31st at 201-265-2607 or by email, amaa@amaa.org.

#### FIELD VISITATIONS

#### **AMAA Field Director Visits**

In January, AMAA Field Director, Mr. Dikran Youmshakian, visited the West Coast. AMAA Sunday was celebrated at the First Armenian Evangelical Church of Glendale, CA. During his stay in Los Angeles, the Field Director also visited members and friends of the AMAA including:



John and Alice Yaldezian of Woodland Hills, CA. Alice's grandfather from Ordu, Armenia, had a life insurance policy, which was one of the many old forgotten policies settled by New York Life. When Mrs. Yaldezian received the settlement amount (\$3,000) from New York Life, she thought it would be appropriate to donate the amount to the AMAA to care for the educational needs of children in Armenia. In honor of her grandfather, the Yaldezians established the Arsen Bedikian Family Trust. The AMAA appreciates their thoughtful gesture.



Mrs. Violet Fermanian of Manhattan Beach, CA supports AMAA's Child Sponsorship Program. Mrs. Fermanian was born in Kessab and was a brilliant student. However, it was impossible for the family to support her higher education. AMAA's Child Education Sponsorship Program helped her to continue her studies in Beirut. She graduated and served the Armenian Evangelical Schools as teacher and principal. She moved to the United States and became an active member of the AMAA. For many years she served as the chairperson of the AMAA's Missions Committee in Downey, CA. Mrs. Fermanian appreciates the Child Sponsorship Program and promotes it to others. □

## Spiritual Corner

#### **CONTINUED KINDNESS**

by Dikran Youmshakian

"The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness" (Psalm 103:8).

During this season of Lent as we prepare to celebrate Easter, we also consider fasting. We try to take a break away from unhealthy habits including certain kinds of food. Lent however is more than that. It is the period leading to the sacrificial death of our Lord. The Lord's sacrifice was an act of ultimate compassion on behalf of God who is "compassionate and gracious" and it was an act of continued kindness toward human beings.

God expects from us to concentrate on compassion during Lent. In addition to avoiding certain food items, let us also avoid hate, anger, jealousy, ill feelings, and let us concentrate on loving-kindness.

Avoiding certain kinds of food only for 40 days will not make a difference, if that is all we do. After Easter, most of us will resume our eating habits and make up for all the lost calories. However, 40 days of compassion and kindness will remain with us as others enjoy the benefits and we share the blessedness of the season. God will help us continue to be passionate. One act of kindness will be followed by another and a broken world will be changed.

#### FIELD VISITATIONS

# AMAA Executive Director visits Members, Supporters and Friends of the AMAA

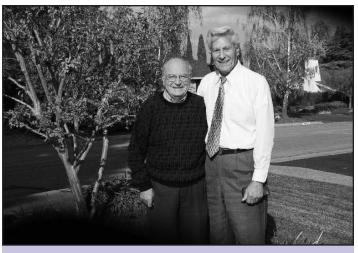
Andy Torigian, Executive Director of the AMAA, during his visits to our various chapters and churches has also been visiting individual members, friends and supporters of the AMAA to brief them on all of the new AMAA projects. An interesting sideline was a tour of the Bedrosian Raisin Factory given to Andy and Elaine Kasparian by Linda Kay Abdulian while they were in Fresno. It was impressive how intricate and involved it is getting the grape from the field and putting it in a box as a raisin. There were numerous Quality Control Stations all along the production line as well as 12 government food inspectors on the premises checking on the cleanliness and safety of the raisins.



From left to right: Gerald Turpanjian, Lori Muncherian, Co-Chair of the LA Orphan and Child Care Committee, Andy Torigian, Patricia Turpanjian, Joyce Stein and Joe Stein in Palos Verdes, CA.



AMAA Board Members visiting the Bedrosian Raisin Factory in Fresno, CA. (Pictured I to r) Linda Kay Abdulian, past Co-Chair of the LA Orphan and Child Care Committee, Krikor Bedrosian, Andy Torigian, Ernest Bedrosian, Elaine Kasparian, Carlotta Bedrosian and Bryan Bedrosian. The Bedrosians support Camp Bedrosian in Shushi, Karabagh.



Andy Torigian visiting with AMAA member and 40 year supporter Levon Gulesserian in Saratoga, CA



From left to right: Andy Torigian visiting the Boston area with Joe and Joyce Stein and Michele and John Simourian. Joyce and Michele were two of the co-founders of the Orphan and Child Care Program.



Visiting with Anitra and Dr. Jack Sheen in Santa Barbara, CA who are the sponsors and supporters of Camp Sheen in Hankavan, Armenia. Sitting Anitra Sheen and Andy Torigian, standing Dr. Jack Sheen and AMAA President Dr. H. Steven Aharonian.

## AMAA Annual Report Highlights - Fiscal 2006 - 07

Serving the Lord and helping meet the needs of others is a privilege and the Armenian Missionary Association of America has been a trustworthy channel in this service.

Fiscal year 2006-07 was full of new and old challenges. The year started with the war in Lebanon which affected the Armenian community there. The AMAA made an appeal to raise much needed financial assistance. The response was generous. The war in Iraq continued to take its toll not only with the loss of human lives but also impacting the economy in the Middle East. Irag, Iran and Syria, still have a large contingency of Armenians needing support. Our churches in Iran and Iraq needed moral and financial support, which was provided through UAECNE. The expanding mission field in Europe now includes Belgium, Holland, Germany and Spain with a greater need for assistance, especially in Belgium where there are seven active Armenian Evangelical Churches. One of the challenges in Belgium is the need for a property that will serve both as church and center for evangelical activities. Armenia continued to be the highlight of the challenges with an ever expanding mission field and the decline of the value of the Dollar. The collapse of the Hankavan Camp Bridge was an additional challenge. Fortunately the needed \$40,000 to rebuild the bridge was raised in response to AMAA's appeal. In addition to the above, AMAA initiated a capital campaign to support major projects in Armenia and elsewhere.

The needs however are much greater than our many achievements listed below. Please continue to pray for the ministries of the AMAA.

#### **ARMENIA**

- Sponsorship of 2,800 needy children and their families through our Child Sponsorship Program
- Operation of an extensive Christian Education program for 7,500 children, youth and young adults, which includes Biblical-moral teaching, art classes, theater groups, tutoring services, children choirs and sports programs. These ministries are held in 68 locations
- Training of Sunday School teachers, youth workers and church leaders
- Operation of medical clinics, including dental services in Yerevan, Vanatzor and Spitak
- Monthly distribution of milk powder formula to 600 or more infants with special nutritional needs (funded by the Armenian Children's Milk Fund)
- Material, social and spiritual outreach to lonely and needy elderly individuals through the adopt-a-granny program
- Scholarship assistance to deserving university students
- Vocational training for young, unskilled people
- Operation of 6 kindergartens
- Support provided to kindergartens

- Monthly financial assistance to needy individuals
- Acquisition and/or construction of church facilities
- Operation of the Evangelical Theological Academy of Armenia
- Operation and funding of the Armenian Evangelical Avedisian School in Yerevan
- Summer camps and Day camps for thousands of needy children
- Christmas and Easter programs for tens of thousands of children
- Support for the Evangelical Churches in Armenia and its 40 congregations and fellowships
- Publication and distribution of Bibles and devotional literature
- Sponsorship of the ministry of visiting pastors, evangelists and fraternal workers, and short-term missionaries
- A wide range of social and spiritual services offered by AMAA's local staff and resident missionaries
- Initiate and support job development programs

#### **A**RGENTINA

- Relief to needy families and elderly people
- Distribution of Bibles & Devotional literature

#### **A**USTRALIA

- Financial support to the Armenian Evang'l Church
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### BELGIUM

Support to the Armenian Evang'l Churches

#### BRAZIL

- Support to the Armenian Evang'l Church
- Distribution of Christian literature
- Scholarship to needy college students
- Relief to needy families

#### BULGARIA

- Support to the Armenian Evang'l Churches
- Summer Children and Youth Camps
- Relief to needy families
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### CANADA

- Support to the Armenian Evang'l Church of Cambridge
- Scholarship to needy college students
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### **CYPRUS**

- Tuition Sponsorship for needy students
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### **E**GYPT

 Support the ministry of the Armenian Evang'l Church of Alexandria, providing Christian literature

## Serving the Needs of Our Communities Around the World

#### **F**RANCE

- Support to two Christian Camps
- Financial Assistance to Panpere & La Lumignon publications
- Support the general Ministries of the Armenian Evangelical Union of France
- Distribution of Christian literature
- Relief to needy retired teachers and pastors
- Support for the Armenian Evang'l Fellowship of Europe
- Church building renovations

#### **G**EORGIA

- Support the ministry of local Armenian Evang'l Churches
- Funding of Summer Youth Camp
- Relief to needy families
- Distribution of Christian literature
- Operate a Soup Kitchen

#### GREECE

- Support to the Armenian Evang'l KG of Kokkinia
- Support to the ministries of the local churches
- Tuition aid to needy students
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### RAN

- Support to the ministry of the three local churches
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### RAC

Support to the ministry of the local church

#### KARABAGH

- Relief to 200 orphans and needy children
- Operate Bedrosian Camp in Shoushi
- Christian Education Programs for children and Youth Sunday Schools, Vacation Bible Schools, Youth Groups
- Distribution of milk formula to infants with special needs
- Operation of six kindergartens
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### **LEBANON**

- Support Haigazian University
- Support to four High Schools, one Middle School and two Elementary Schools
- Support to the Centers for the Armenian Handicapped
- Financial aid to Daily Vacation Bible Schools
- Support Christian Endeavor Youth Camps
- Funding the programs of the Armenian Evang'l Social Service Center
- Special grants to subsidize the salaries of local pastors
- Support youth ministries
- Relief to needy families

#### Russia

- Support to the ministries of the Armenian Evang'l Churches of Moscow and Sochi
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### SYRIA

- Support to six Elementary Schools
- Financial assistance for KCHAG summer camp in Kessab
- Financial aid to Daily Vacation Bible Schools
- Financial aid to financially weak churches
- Relief provision to needy retired teachers
- Financial aid to the Association for the Armenian Blind
- Financial aid to the Armenian Old Age Home of Aleppo
- Special grants to subsidize the salaries of local pastors
- Support for the medical and dental clinics of Christ's Church in Aleppo
- Support through social and relief services
- Relief to needy families

#### **TURKEY**

- Distribution of Christian literature
- Support local Armenian Evangelical Churches

#### UNITED STATES

- Financial aid to six Armenian Evangelical Churches & Fellowships
- Financial aid to Armenian Evangelical Merdinian School
- Financial aid to Sahag-Mesrob Schools
- Financial aid to Theological Students and interns
- Financial aid to Ararat Home
- Financial aid to Camp Arev and Camp Arevelk
- Financial aid to the AEUNA's Youth Ministry
- Financial aid to AEUNA's publication
- Scholarship to needy college and university students
- Organizing Literary Contests
- Emergency relief aid for victims of natural disasters, such as the Hurricane Katrina
- Distribution of Christian literature

#### **U**RUGUAY

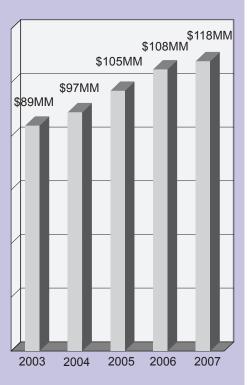
- Financial assistance to the local church
- Relief provisions to needy families
- Distribution of Bible & Christian literature

#### OTHER COUNTRIES

- Support Child Evangelism Programs in Mozambique
- Support the Ferraz de Vasconcellos mission center of the Armenian Evang'l Church of Sao Paulo
- Emergency relief aid for victims of natural disasters
- Support new ministries in other countries

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) emphasizes full financial disclosure, accountability and careful stewardship.

# NET ASSETS OF THE AMAA



God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. (Hebrews 6:10)

#### **Armenian Missionary Association of America, Inc. Consolidated Statements of Financial Position As of July 31, 2007**

#### **ASSETS**

Cash	\$	536,381
Interest receivable and prepaid expenses		121,167
Pledges receivable		
Total Cash and Receivables		
Investments: (Note 3)		
Cash equivalents		
Corporate stocks		80,937,613
Bonds and notes		11,549,353
Real estate		12,253,605
Total Investments		
Loans receivable, less allowance for doubtful		
accounts of \$50,000 in 2007 and \$50,000 in 2006		1 806 202
Land, buildings, and equipment at cost, less		. 1,090,202
accumulated depreciation of \$1,891,576 in 2007		E EEE 110
and \$1,910,207 in 2006 (Note 4)		. 5,555,110
Total Assets	\$ 1	19,611,874
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		

#### Liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	100,871
Custodial accounts (Note 5)	1,862,112
Total Liabilities\$	1.962.983

#### **Net Assets**

Unrestricted (Note 6) Undesignated Temporarily restricted (Note 7) Permanently restricted (Note 8)		6,230,328
Total Net Assets	\$	117,648,891
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	. \$	119,611,874

# Armenian Missionary Association of America, Inc. Consolidated Statements of Activities and Changes in Net Assets For the Years Ended July 31, 2007

Revenues,	Gains	&	Other	Support
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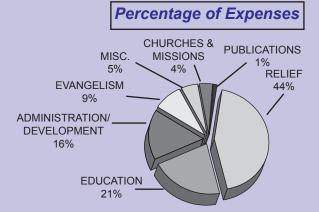
Revenues, Gains & Other Support	
Contributions and bequests  Net realized gains (losses) on investments	
Net unrealized gains on investments	6,136,043
Investment income (Note 3)	4,030,184
Transfer investment income	0
Net assets released from restrictions -	
Satisfaction of program objectives	0
Total Revenues, Gains & Other Support	\$ 15,896,367
Program Services	
Education	
Child education	\$ 708,669
General scholarship	
Leadership and theological training	137,420
Haigazian University of Beirut	388.271
Relief	
Evangelism	
Churches and missions	
Publications	-,
Living trusts	
Supporting Services	
Travel and hospitality	45,262
Legal expense	11,957
Development project	122,733
Office administration	850,296
Depreciation	186,870
Pension distribution	
Total Expenses	\$ 6,499,727
Change in Net Assets	\$ 9,396,640
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$ 108,252,251
Net Assets at Year-End	\$ 117,648,891

#### HOW INCOME WAS RECEIVED...

#### Percentage of Income

# NET GAINS ON INVESTMENT INCOME 25% CONTRIBUTIONS AND BEQUESTS 32%

#### ... HOW IT WAS SPENT



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#### Սուրբ Ծնունդի Ջերմ Պատգամը

#### Վեր․ Դոկտ․ Ռընէ Լեւոնեան

Ամանորը եւ Սուրբ Ծնունդըբոլորիս համարնուիրական տօներ են։ Յիսուս Քրիստոս Իր ծնունդով բացայայ տեց կեանքի իմաստը, կարեւորութիւնը եւ բարձրագոյն ուրախութեան գաղտնիքը։ Բոլոր առողջ դատողութիւն ունեցող մարդիկ կ՚ընդունին Յիսուս Քրիստոսը, սակայն, ինչպես երկու հազար տարիներ առաջ, այնպես ալ այսօր, միայն մարդկային անբարշտութիւնն է, որ կ՚ապստամրի Աստուծոյ ճշմարտութեան՝ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի հանդեպ, չցանկանալով կիսել մարդու նկատմամբ ունեցած իր Իշխանութիւնը ոչ մէկուն, նոյնիսկ Աստուծոյ հետ։

Հայաստանեայց Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի եւ Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան Ամանորի եւ Սուրբ Ծննդեան նուիրուած հանդէսները լաւ եւ հետաքրքրաշարժ տօնակատարութիւններ էին, որոնք երեխաներուն, պատանիներուն եւ անոնց ծնողքներուն կր պարգեւէին ուրախութիւն։ Հանդէսներուն ներկաները ականատես կր դառնային երեխաներու ոյժերով պատրաստուած րեմադրութիւններուն, հետաքրքիր համերգներուն, խաղերուն, կաղանդ պապային եւ Ձիւնանոյշի ելոյթներուն, որոնց մասնակցողները կ'րնդունուէին յատուկ ջերմութեամբ եւ ուրախութեամբ։

Այս տարի՝ 2008-ին, կր լրանայ Սպիտակի երկրաշարժի 20 տարին։ Սրտի խոր կսկիծով կր յիշենք մեր պատմութեան ահարկու եւ սարսափելի աղէտին մասին, որու հետեւան քները մինչեւ այսօր զգալի են...: Երկրաշարժի օրերուն, մեր հայրենիքը կարօտ էր օգնութեան, կարօտ էր քաջալերութեան, յոյսի, խնամքի, բժշկութեան...: Սուրբ Ծննդեան աւետիսը՝ «Մի՛ վախնաք, որովհետեւ ահա՛ ես մեծ ուրախութեան աւետիս մր կու տամ ձեզի, որ ամբողջ ժողովուրդին պիտի րլլայ որովհետեւ այսօր՝ Դաւիթի քաղաքին մէջ՝ Փրկիչ մր ծնաւ ձեզի, որ 0ծեալ Տէր է» (Ղուկաս 2. 10-11), աշխարհի ժողովուրդներուն կողմէ ցուցաբերուող հետ, մեր մխիթարութիւնն էր այդ օրերուն։ Այո՛ մենք կորսնցուցինք, ընկնուեցանք, տխրեցանք, յուսահատեցանք, սակայն Աւետարանը կ'րսէ, որ Ցիսուս եկաւ «սրտով կոտրուածները բժշկելու», «սգաւորները մխիթարելու»...: Այս միտքն է, որ այսօր ալ կր քաջալերէ եւ յոյս կր ներշնչէ հաւատքով նայելու ապագային եւ համոզուած րլյալու, որ ամէն արհաւիրք, ամէն հիւանդութիւն ունի իր դարմանը։

Այս միտքերով պարուրուած, Սուրբ Ծննդեան օրը՝ Յունուարի 6-ին, կ'երթայի երկրաշարժի մակակեդրոնը՝ Սպիտակի Նալբանտ գիւղը, որ այժմ կը կոչուի Շիրակա-մուտ, մասնակցելու տեղի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի Ամանորի եւ Սուրբ Ծննդեան նուիրուած հանդէսին։

Եկեղեցիի դահլիճին մէջ իրենց ծնողներուն հետ հաւաքուած էին մօտ 250 երեխաներ։ Այդ դահլիճին մէջ ներկայ եղող բոլոր երեխաները լոյս աշխարհ եկած են երկրաշարժէն ետք։ Հանդիսութեան ընթացքին, յատկապէս Սուրբ Ծննդեան նուիրուած բեմադրութեան ժամանակ, նայելով երեխաներու դէմքերուն, կը տեսնէի մեծագոյն հետաքրքրութիւն բեմին վրայ ծաւալող դէպքերուն հանդէպ՝ Յիսուսի Ծննդեան պատմութիւնը, Վանաձորի եւ Շիրակամուտի Սուրբ Ծննդեան նուիրուած երեխաներուն երգերուն կատարողութեամբ։

Վանաձորի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի հոգեւոր հովիւ՝ Վեր. Սամուել Կիրակոսեան ներկաներուն փոխանցեց Սուրբ Ծննդեան պատգամը՝ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի աշխարհ գալու առաքելութեան նպատակը, «Աստուած այնպես սիրեց աշխարհը, որ մինչեւ անգամ տուաւ Իր Միածին Որդին, որպեսզի ո՛վ որ հաւատայ անոր՝ չկորսուի, հապա ունենայ յաւիտենական կեանքը» (Յովհ. 3. 16)։ Աստուածային այս մեծ նուերը՝ մանուկ Յիսուսի, Սուրբ Ծննդեան տօնական օրերուն, տեղ կը գտնե ամեն մէկուս սրտին ու ամեն մէկուս տանը մեջ եւ իր ներկայութեամբ կր սփոփէ եւ կ՚ուրախացնէ մեց։

...1988-h Դեկտեմբերին, Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան Գործադիր Տնօրէն՝ վեր. Մովսէս Ճանպազեանի առաջարկութեամբ, Ֆրանսայի Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու կողմէ ես եւ տիկինս՝ Սիլվին, եկանք Հայաստան եւ անմիջապէս մեկնեցանք Նալպանտ, տեսնելու թէ ինչո՞վ կրնայ Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակութիւնը եւ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիները օգտակար րլլալ երկրաշարժէն տուժած բնակավայրերուն։ Նալպանտի մէջ այցելեցինք ընտանիք մը, ուր տեսանք տարեց տիկին մր իր մէկ տարեկան թոռնիկին հետ, որու ծնողները մահացած էին երկրաշարժի պատճառով։ Թոռնիկը՝ Նազարէթ, սեւ, գանգուր մազերով մանուկ էր, որ երկրաշարժէն ետք երկու օր մնացած էր փլատակներուն տակ։ Մեծ մայրը կր պատմէր, որ երբ Նազարէթին հանեցին փլատակներու տակէն, անոր թշիկները չորցած էին եւ արցունքի կաթիլները՝ սառած։ Ես եւ Սիլվին շատ յուզուեցանք եւ ուրախացանք, երբ իմացանք Նազարէթի փրկութեան մասին։ Գրկեցինք զինք, սիրեցինք, մխիթարեցինք անոր մեծ մայրիկը, որ կորսնցուցեր էր իր հարազատները եւ մնացեր էր Նազարէթի եւ անոր երկու մեծ եղբայրներուն հետ։

2001-ին, երբ Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութիւնը սկսաւ իր կրթական, բարեգործական եւ մշակութային ծրագիրները իրականացնել Նալպանտի մեջ, առիթով մը տօնական մեծ հանդիսութիւն մը կազմակերպեցինք ընտանիքներուն համար։ Ես ներկաներուն պատմեցի Նազարեթի մասին եւ հարցուցի, թէ արդեօք իրենց մեջ կա՞յ Նազարեթ անունով պատանի մը։ Եւ ահա, բարձրահասակ տղայ մը ոտքի ելաւ եւ ըսաւ, թէ ինքն է Նազարեթը։ Մենք ողջագուրուեցանք։ Ասիկա գեղեցիկ եւ սրտառուչ հանդիպում մըն էր Նազարեթի հետ, զոր տեսած էինք երկրաշարժեն ետք, որպես փոքրիկ մեկ երեխայ...:

#### Ամանորի եւ Սուրբ Ծննդեան Հանդիսութիւններ Հայաստանի եւ Ղարաբաղի Մէջ

Հայաստանեայց Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի եւ Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան Ամանորի եւ Սուրբ Ծննդեան նուիրուած հանդիսութիւնները, որոնք սկսած էին Դեկտեմբերի 20-ին, աւարտուեցան Յունուարի 12-ին, Երեւանէն մօտ 200 Ք.Մ. հեռաւորութեան վրայ գտնուող՝ Ատրպէյճանի սահմանակից Նոյեմբերեան քաղաքի մէջ։

Տօնակատարութիւնը պատրաստուած էր Նոյեմբերեանի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի եւ տեղի Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան Գրասենեակի աշխատակիցներու համատեղ ոյժերով (պատասխանատու՝ Գառնիկ Թութիկեան)։ Հանդիսութիւնը տեղի ունեցաւ մշակոյթի դահլիճին մէջ, ուր հաւաքուած էին մօտ 200 երեխաներ։ Թէեւ դահլիճը ցուրտ էր, բայց երեխաները չէին ուզեր հեռանալ Իսկ Փոքրիկ Հեղինէն, ելոյթի ժա-մանակ այնքան կը մսէր, որ ուսուցչուհիին առաջարկով ընդհատեց ելոյթը, եւ քիչ մը տաքնալե ետք, վերադար-ձաւ եւ շարունակեց իր ելոյթը։

Երեխաներուն ելոյթները ա՛յնքան սրտառուչ էին, որ հանդիսականները անտեսելով ցուրտը, կը դիտէին ելոյթ– ները եւ իրենց ծափողջոյններով կը խրախուսէին երեխաները։ Հանդիսութեան ներկայ էր նաեւ Նոյեմբերեանի քաղաքապետը։

Արդէն երկար տարիներ է, որ Հայստանեայց Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին եւ Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութիւնը Հայաստանի եւ Արցախի մօտ 50 վայրերու մէջ՝ ինչպէս Երեւան, Վանաձոր, Գյումրի, Ստեփանաւան, Իջեւան, Տաշիր, Թումանեան, Արմավիր, Թալին, Հրազդան, Ստեփանակերտ, Շուշի եւ այլտեղեր, կը կազմակերպեն Ամանորի եւ Սուրբ Ծննդեան նուիրուած հանդէսներ, որոնց կը մասնակցին եւ Ծննդեան յատուկ նուէրներ կը ստանան շուրջ 20,000 երեխաներ։

Մենք մեր շնորհակալութիւնները կ'ուզենք յայտնել Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան, Հոլանտայի «Տորքաս» եւ Ֆրանսայի «Սէլ» եւ «Յոյս Հայաստանի Համար» կազմակերպութիւններուն, Ամանորի եւ Սուրբ Ծննդեան նուիրուած հանդէսներու կազմակերպման իրենց աջակցութեան համար:





(Ծար. նախորդ էջէն)

Այս տարուան հանդիսութեան ժամանակ, Յունուարի 6-ին, կողքս նստած էր 82-ամեայ Վլատիմիր պապիկը, որ մեծագոյն ուշադրութեամբ կը հետեւէր երեխաներու երգերուն եւ կը լսէր պատգամը...: Տեսնելով անոր դէմքին դրոշմուած համակ ուշադրութիւնը, հարցուցի.

- Դուք ծնած ըլլալու էք 1920-ական թուականներուն, երբ Հայաստանի մէջ նոր հաստատուած էին Խորհրդային կարգերը։ Ինչպէ՞ս էր այն ժամանակ հոգեւոր կեանքը, հաւատքը։ Արդեօք երեխաներուն համար, թերեւս գաղտնի կը կազմակերպուէի՞ն Սուրբ Ծննդեան նուիրուած ընտանեկան հանդէսներ։
- Ո՛չ, եղբայր, այն ժամանակ այսպիսի բան չկար։ Եւ ոչ մէկու միտքով չէր անցներ խօսիլ Սուրբ Ծնունդի՝ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի մասին։ Ես երջանիկ եմ, որ հիմա կը տեսնեմ այս երեխաները, որոնք ազատօրէն կը խօսին Յիսուսի մասին եւ կ'երգեն Անոր նուիրուած երգեր...։

Դուրսը ցուրտ էր։ Բաւական ձիւն կար։ Դահլիճին մէջ, կարելի է ըսել, նոյնպէս ցուրտ էր։ Տակաւին չկան միջոցներ լիովին տաքցնելու դահլիճը։ Մէկ անկիւնը դրուած էր փայտէ վառարանը։ Ներկաներէն ոմանք երբեմն կը մօտենային վառարանին՝ տաքցնելու իրենց ձեռքերը եւ նորէն կը վերադառնային իրենց տեղը։ Սակայն, բոլորն ալ սիրտով ուրախ էին։ Անոնց մէջ կար Սուրբ Ծննդեան Լոյսր...

Տօնակատարութիւններէն յետոյ այցելեցինք մի քանի ընտանիքներ։ Տեղ մը, երբ ներս մտանք, մեզի թուեցաւ, որ դուրսը աւելի տաք էր քան ներսը։ Բայց ընտանիքի անդամները ամէն բան ըրեր էին, որ իրենց այցելուները հիւրասիրուին լաւագոյնով, որ իրենք ունին եւ որոնք դրած էին իրենց համեստ սեղանին վրայ։

Այսպես է մեր ժողովուրդը։ Միշտ իր ունեցածը՝ նոյնիսկ վերջին պատառը՝ պատրաստ եղած է կիսելու ոչ միայն հարազատի, այլեւ հիւրի, ճանապարհորդի, օտարներու հետ։ Բայց ես, փառք Աստուծոյ, Հայաստանի մէջ հիւր, ճանապարհորդ եւ օտար չեմ։ Ես Հայաստանի զաւակն եմ արդէն 14 տարիներ...: □

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#### **OBITUARIES**

#### Dr. Vahram Babikian

Dr. Vahram Babikian, the 7th child of Yousouf Babikian and Makrouhi Hadidian, was born on December 29, 1911 in Aintab, Turkey. They were members of the Armenian



Evangelical Church of Aintab.

In 1915 when the Armenian Genocide began, the Babikian family settled in the town of Selimieh for three years. In 1918 they returned to Aintab. The peaceful life was interrupted again and the Babikian family, along with most of the population, moved from Turkey to Aleppo, Syria.

Vahram obtained his high school education at Aleppo College. Upon his graduation, in 1930, the family moved to Beirut and Vahram continued his education in the American University of Beirut. He graduated from the Medical school in 1936 and moved to Jarablus, Syria practicing medicine for two years there.

In 1938, Vahram moved back to Aleppo, Syria and established his medical practice, which functioned until 1992. In 1955, he came to the USA and joined a residency program in psychiatry in Long Island. He returned to Aleppo, and became the most distinguished psychiatrist in Northern Syria. Vahram treated his patients with devotion, compassion, immense knowledge and wisdom.

On July 21, 1949 Vahram married Odette Chamichian the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Luder Chamichian. God blessed the family with two children and three grandchildren. Vahram was a loving husband, devoted father, and loyal son who took care of his parents until their death.

Vahram was also involved in numerous church and community services. His services were always commendable.

In 1992, Vahram and his wife Odette settled in Fresno CA, to be near their relatives. He enjoyed the warmth in sunny California as well as the warmth of his relatives.

In recent years, Vahram faced a few age-related health challenges. With the support of his loving wife he faced each of these challenges well. On Jan. 1, 2008, he went to his eternal life. Vahram is survived by his wife of 58 years, Odette, daughter Vera Nofal of Amman, Jordan and her son Moudar of Canada, his son, Dr. Paul Babikian and his wife Amy and children James and Catherine of De Moines, Iowa and sister Veha Chamichian of Mount Pleasant, Michigan.

May his precious memory always be with us.  $\square$ 

#### **Pearl Lucy Shapian**

Pearl Lucy died of natural causes on February 3, 2008 at the age of 87. A Ridgefield, NJ resident for the last 65 years, she was the daughter of Zvart Halfa and Berj Shapian. Pearl is survived by her sister, Victoria Leggio, and nephews, Robert Leggio and William Leggio.

Pearl enjoyed traveling with her sister Rose, after retirement from 30 years in a civilian administration position with the US Navy. She was a member of the Oratorio Society of New York for 51 years. Her intelligence, leadership and musical talents will be missed.

In lieu of flowers, donations were made to the Armenian Missionary Association of America. □

#### Rosine Shamlian

Our beloved Rosine Shamlian went to be with her Lord on Monday, February 4, 2008. She was 93 years young when she died in her home in San Mateo, CA.

Rosine was born in Marash, Turkey in 1914. She immigrated with her family to Egypt after surviving the Armenian Genocide. There she fell in love and married Rev. John Tabakian. Rosine and John were blessed with two wonderful children, Paul and Armine.

The family moved to Fresno, CA in 1958 when John was asked to lead Olivet Armenian Congregational Church in Parlier. John and Rosine made a life for themselves in the Central Valley until John's unexpected passing in 1966. Rosine joined her daughter in the San Francisco Bay Area where she met and later married the late Toros Shamlian.

Rosine was a dedicated mother, grandmother and servant of God. She was not only blessed with two loving children, but also a wonderful son-in-law, Dr. Zaven Adrouny and caring daughter-in-law, Lucy Tabakian. She was also blessed with five grandchildren: Jane, John, Karen, Stephanie and John Paul. Rosine was fortunate enough to witness the births of her great grandchildren and doted on them endlessly. They include Sloan, Emily, Gillian and Brooke.

Rosine carried her faith with God into all aspects of her life. Her tireless commitment to serving the Lord, her church and her family was her greatest joy in life. Her life can never be replaced, but her memory will be one her family will cherish forever.

#### **Eugenie Y. Messerlian**

Eugenie Y. Messerlian (Hazarossian), formerly of Cranston, RI, passed away Thursday, December 13, 2007 at Sunny View Nursing Home in Warwick, RI. She was the beloved wife of the late Leon J. Messerlian.

Born In Cairo, Egypt, a daughter of the late Hagop and Perooz (Seroonian) Hazarossian, she came to the U.S. in 1907 settling in Long Island, NY, before moving to Cranston in 1928.

She was the devoted mother of Leon H. Messerlian of Clermont, GA, Robert B. Messerlian of Cranston, and Evelyn A. DerMarderosian of Drexel Hill, PA, loving grandmother of six, loving great grandmother of eleven, and dear sister of the late Edward Harrison, Leon Hazarossian and Albert Hazarossian

The Funeral Service was held at the Armenian Euphrates Evangelical Church of Providence, RI. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions were made to the Armenian Missionary Association of America and the Armenian Evangelical Euphrates Church.

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff also wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends whose names were submitted to us for publication in the AMAA News.

- \* Raffi Chalian of Latham, NY
- \* Rev. Avedis Hovsepian of Armenian Home, CA
- \* Angele Kalfayan of Mission Hills, CA
- \* Armine Salibian of Los Angeles, CA
- \* Dr. Levon Topouzian of Skokie, IL

\* Memorials designated for AMAA

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. "Yes," says the Spirit, they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

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